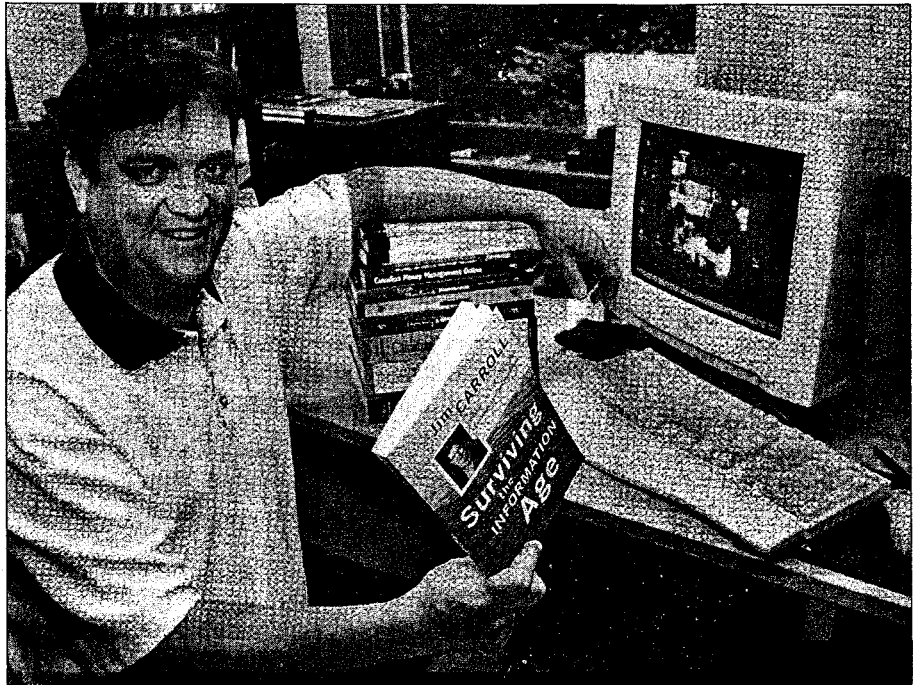




Staff photo by Fred Loek

Lorne Park resident Jim Carroll has written over 20 books on the Internet. Here he shows us his latest effort.

You don't have to be a computer geek to read Jim Carroll's books

By MIKE BEGGS
Special

He's demystifying the Internet for Canadians.

Mississauga's Jim Carroll is co-author of such national best-sellers as the annual *Canadian Internet Handbook* and the *Canadian Internet Directory And Research Guide*. All told, he and writing partner Rick Broadhead have sold more than 400,000 copies of their books and in the fall of 1997, they released six new titles.

While thoroughly comprehensive, their books are simple, straightforward and fun - published with the disclaimer that "you don't have to be a brilliant computer geek to read our books."

That's a good thing, because they find most Canadians are "woefully unprepared" to take advantage of the exploding amount of information on the Internet.

Canadians waste estimated thousands of hours each day try-

ing to find information on the Internet, something that translates to millions of dollars in losses, annually.

"I think people go on the Internet to do a search, and when they're told there are 100 web sites on a particular topic, they freak out and give up," Carroll said. "People don't take the time to learn how to search. Too many of them give up too easily. But if you master this stuff, it can change what you do."

Carroll was working as a chartered accountant back in 1982, when he first started exploring the Internet. In 1990, he quit his day job, and four years later he and Broadhead put out their first *Canadian Internet Directory Handbook*, published by Prentice Hall Canada.

"We thought we'd sell 5,000 copies and it sold 75,000 copies. It went to No. 1 in the *Financial Post* and *The Toronto Star*. We were just completely blown away," said the 38-year-old father of two.

These days, Carroll splits his time between writing at his Lorne Park home and delivering keynote speeches about the Internet across North America. He penned the motivational book, *Surviving The Information Age*, is featured in the *IBM Family Guide To The Internet* and constantly fields interview requests as one of Canada's Internet gurus.

But, like any self-employed person, he can "lay awake some nights wondering how the bills are going to be paid."

Currently, over 8 million Canadians use the Internet. Carroll and Broadhead maintain that the art of on-line research will soon become critical to career survival. They also say that with more information at their fingertips than ever before, consumers have the chance to level the playing field in many areas.

They've just published *Good Health On-line: A Wellness Guide For Every Canadian and Mutual Funds and RRSP's On-line*.

Carroll claims that the Internet is having a dramatic impact on Canada's health care system, "that often leaves people in the dark about their own medical circumstances."

"Once we are diagnosed we can use the Internet to better understand our condition and take better care of ourselves," Carroll said.

What doctors have to do is help patients by supplying them with a list of good web sites.

The author's foremost concern is the failure of the Canadian government to keep pace with the U.S. in safeguarding Internet users against Cyberfraud, violation of privacy and unsubstantiated information.

"There seems to be an appalling amount of ignorance in Ottawa as to what this thing is all about," Carroll said. "In the U.S., Vice President Al Gore is one of the Internet's biggest champions."

Carroll and Broadhead's books are available in all major book shops. You can also visit the Prentice Hall Canada web site at www.phcanada.com.